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SUBJECT: JOS, NIGERIA INTERFAITH DAY OF SERVICE

REF: (A) STATE 92631
(B) ABUJA 01744
(C) ABUJA 01883

¶1. On October 17, DCM led a group of 30 inter-agency volunteers to Jos to refurbish sports facilities in fulfillment of the President's call for an Interfaith Day of Service (ref A). This event was one of three community service activities undertaken by the Mission, which included the renovation of a girl's dormitory in Lagos, and Polio Immunization Plus days in Abuja (refs B and C). In Jos, Mission personnel joined local youth and Peace Clubs to refurbish a recreational center that unites Muslim and Christian Nigerian youth in sporting activities. The refurbishment included providing new basketball hoops and nets, resetting a basketball pole, cleaning and repainting lines on the courts and a donation of balls to each Peace Club.

¶2. Jos, about three hours by road from Abuja, has special symbolic value as a venue because of politically-inspired communal violence in November 2008 that left several hundred people dead. Mission employees partnered with representatives from Peace Clubs that were established under USAID's Conflict Abatement through Local Mitigation (CALM). The court was built in 2003 through a USAID-funded project called Basketball for Peace. Although the center continues to be used daily, it no longer receives USG funding.

¶3. The successful day concluded with a ribbon cutting ceremony, followed by brief remarks from the DCM and a representative from the state Commission of Youth and Sport and a symbolic hand-over of balls to a representative from each of the 18 local Peace Clubs.

SANDERS